

Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. (D-IL) issued the following statement after the U.S. House of Representatives approved H.R. 2828, a bill to compensate relatives of U.S. citizens killed in the 1998 embassy bombings in Africa. Congressman Jackson and Republican Whip Roy Blunt (R-MO) co-sponsored the measure, which attracted strong bi-partisan support.

"I am pleased that the House today has fulfilled an obligation, taken responsibility and done the right thing by passing legislation to compensate families of U.S. citizens killed in the 1998 embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. For nine long years, these families have waited for the U.S. government to provide a full accounting and proper redress for their painful loss. This bill ensures that their wait has not been in vain."

The bill authorizes \$18 million for the U.S. State Department to compensate the families of the victims of the embassy bombings. It also authorizes \$940,000 in compensation for families of persons killed while serving on a U.S. diplomatic or consular mission abroad since January 1, 1998. Furthermore, the legislation authorizes the compensation of Foreign Service or executive branch employees killed by future terrorist acts.

Jackson continued, "Just as it was right for Congress to compensate the families of victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks, it is right for Congress to do the same for the families of victims of the August 7th terrorist attacks three years earlier. These families share the tragedy and bear the suffering of having loved ones killed in our country's fight against the tyranny and treachery of al Qaeda. As a country, we must stand, united, with those who have fallen and those who they left behind."

On August 7, 1998, simultaneous car bombs at the U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Nairobi, Kenya exploded, killing hundreds. In Nairobi, about 212 people were killed and an estimated 4,000 injured, and in Dar es Salaam, the attack killed at least 11 and wounded 85. Among the dead were 12 U.S. citizens. The attacks were linked to the al Qaeda terrorist network headed by Osama bin Laden, resulting in the Federal Bureau of Investigation placing the group's leader on its ten most wanted list. Later, an official review panel found that several administrations and Congresses failed over the past decade "to invest adequate efforts and resources to reduce the vulnerability of U.S. diplomatic missions around the world to terrorist attacks."

"In passing this bill, we in Congress recognize the sacrifice and make a reckoning of those who died serving our country overseas: Marine Sergeant Nathan Aliganga; Julian Bartley, Sr.; Julian Bartley, Jr.; Jean Rose Dalizu; Molly Huchaby Hardy; Army Staff Sergeant Kenneth Hobson II; Prabhi G. Kavalier; Arlene Kirk; Dr. Louise Martin; Michelle O'Connor; Air Force Master Sergeant Sherry Lynn Olds; Tom Shah. May they rest in peace and may their families take some comfort and find some closure in today's passage," Jackson concluded.

In his seventh term, Congressman Jackson sits on the House Appropriations Committee, serving as the Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs as well as the fourth most senior Democrat on the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, and Related Agencies. He also sits on the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Developments, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies.